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(71) Applicant: GTECH RHODE ISLAND CORPORATION [US/US]: 55 Technology Way, West Greenwich, RI 02817 (US).

(72) Inventor: DUTTON, Clifton, C.: 121 Benevolent Street, Providence RI 02906 (US).

(74) Agent: MANUS, Peter, J.: Edwards & Angell, LLP, 130 Water Street, Boston, MA 02109 (US).

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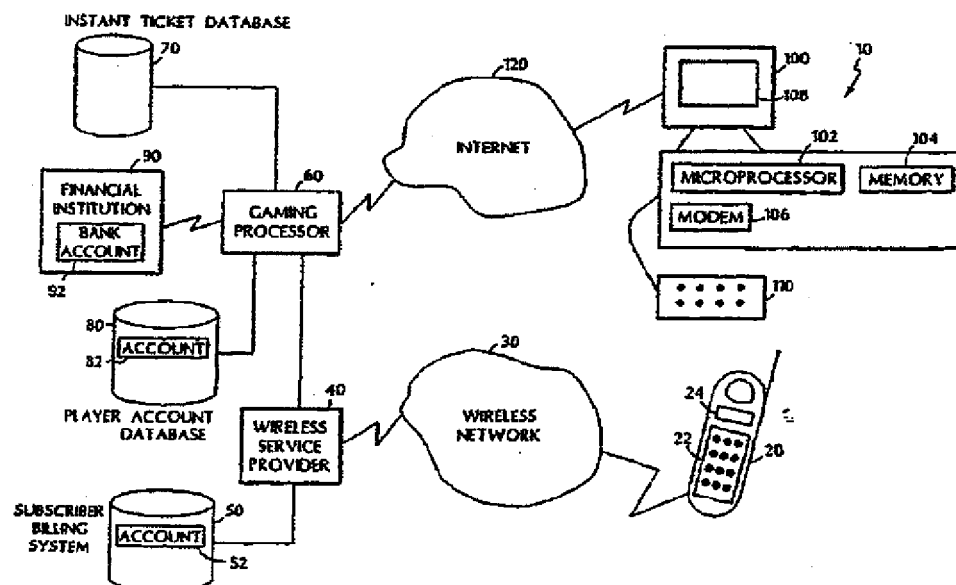
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(54) Title: WIRELESS LOTTERY GAME



(57) Abstract: A player plays a wagering game such as an instant lottery game over a wireless network (30). A processor (60) is capable of issuing a gaming ticket, i.e., an instant lottery ticket, in response to a request made by the player for placing a wager on the wagering game. The processor is also capable of determining whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket based on a predetermined criterion. A wireless communications device such as a cellular telephone (20) is used by the player for making the request to place the wager and for receiving an indication from the processor whether the gaming ticket has been determined to be a winning ticket.

WIRELESS LOTTERY GAME

Background of the Invention

5 This invention relates to a lottery game, and in particular, an instant lottery game that may be played using a wireless communications device.

 In a typical lottery game, a player purchases a lottery ticket from a point of sale terminal located at a retail establishment. The lottery ticket usually contains a set of numbers selected from a universe of numbers that is to be compared to a set of winning numbers at a time subsequent to the purchase of the lottery ticket. A player often has the option of selecting the set of numbers for the lottery ticket or allowing the point of sale terminal to produce a lottery ticket with a set of numbers chosen automatically using a quick-pick feature.

 Further, the use of wireless networks, such as cellular telephone networks, is increasing. Cellular telephone users often find it convenient to conduct as many transactions as possible using their cellular telephones.

Summary of the Invention

 In general, in one aspect, the invention features a system for playing a wagering game by a player over a wireless network. A processor is capable of issuing a gaming ticket in response to a request made by the player for placing a wager on the wagering game, the processor being capable of determining whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket based on a predetermined criterion. A wireless communications device is used by the player for making the request to place the wager and for receiving an indication from the processor whether the gaming ticket has been determined to be a winning ticket.

 Implementations of the invention may also include one or more of the following features. The wagering game

may be an instant lottery game and the gaming ticket may be an instant lottery ticket.

The system may further include an account database connected to the processor for storing information relating to the gaming ticket and the wager. The account database may store a player gaming account associated with the player, and an amount corresponding to the wager may be deducted from the player gaming account when the player makes the request to place the wager. A monetary prize associated with a gaming ticket determined to be a winning ticket may be credited to the player gaming account.

The system may further include a ticket database from which the processor obtains the gaming ticket. The system may further include a billing system associated with use of the wireless communications device over the wireless network, the billing system storing a billing account, such that an amount corresponding to the wager is deducted from the player gaming account when the player makes the request to place the wager.

The gaming ticket may include gaming information and the predetermined criterion may be predetermined winning information, and the determination whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket may be made by comparing the gaming information to the predetermined winning information.

The wireless communications device may be a cellular telephone. The wireless communications device may include a display, and the indication whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket may be displayed to the player on the display. The wireless communications device may include a keypad for dialing a code to make the request to place the wager.

The system may further include a computer terminal capable of communicating with the processor over a second

network to make the request to place the wager. The computer terminal may be an on-line point of sale terminal.

In general, in another aspect, the invention features a system for playing a wagering game by a player
5 over a wireless network. A processor is capable of issuing a gaming ticket in response to a request made by the player for placing a wager on the wagering game. The processor is also capable of determining whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket based on a predetermined criterion. An
10 account database is connected to the processor for storing information relating to the gaming ticket and the wager, the account database storing a player gaming account associated with the player, and an amount corresponding to the wager is deducted from the player gaming account when the player
15 makes the request to place the wager. The processor obtains the gaming ticket from a ticket database. A wireless communications device is used by the player for making the request to place the wager and for receiving an indication from the processor whether the gaming ticket has been
20 determined to be a winning ticket.

In general, in another aspect, the invention features a method of playing a wagering game over a wireless network using a wireless communications device. Issuance of a gaming ticket is requested to place a wager on the
25 wagering game over the wireless network using the wireless communications device. The gaming ticket is issued, and a determination is made whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket based on a predetermined criterion. An indication whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket is provided
30 over the wireless network to the wireless communications device.

Implementations of the invention may also include one or more of the following features. The method may

further include establishing an account prior to playing the wagering game. An amount corresponding to the wager may be deducted from the account when requesting issuance of the gaming ticket to place the wager. A monetary prize
5 associated with a winning ticket may be posted to the account.

The method may further include transmitting the gaming information to the wireless communications device for display on the wireless communications device. The step of
10 requesting issuance of the gaming ticket may include dialing a predetermined code on the wireless communications device.

The gaming ticket may include gaming information and the predetermined criterion may be winning information, and whether the gaming ticket is determined to be a winning
15 ticket may include comparing the gaming information to the winning information.

The present invention has the advantage that an instant lottery game or other wagering game may be played easily and conveniently from almost any location using a
20 wireless communications device such a cellular telephone.

The present invention has the further advantage that a player may purchase an instant gaming ticket and immediately obtain the game results at any time chosen by the player.

25 Other features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description, and from the claims.

Brief Description of the Drawings

FIG. 1 is a somewhat diagrammatic sketch of an
30 electronic lottery transaction processing system according to the present invention.

FIGS. 2A and 2B are a flow chart showing a method of playing an instant lottery game using the system of FIG. 1.

Description of the Preferred Embodiments

The lottery game of the present invention allows players to place wagers using a wireless communications device such as a cellular telephone.

5 FIG. 1 shows an electronic lottery transaction processing system 10. A player may perform instant lottery or other gaming transactions with system 10 via a wireless gaming device 20 or a computer terminal 100.

10 Wireless communications device 20 is an electronic device capable of wireless communication over a wireless network 30. Wireless communications device 20 transmits information to and communicates with a wireless service provider 40 over wireless network 30. Device 20 may be used by a subscriber to the service provided by wireless service
15 provider 40, usually by paying a fee to provider 40 for use of device 20.

20 Wireless communications device 20 is preferably a cellular telephone which is capable of communication over a cellular network. A player may use a cellular telephone to play an instant lottery game using system 10 by subscribing to a cellular telephone service, such as a digital telephone service.

25 Wireless communications device 20 may be used to dial telephone numbers or similar codes. Device 20 may have a keypad 22 similar to a standard telephone, in which letters are assigned to each of the number keys on the keypad. Keypad 22 may be used to enter information to be transmitted by wireless communications device 20 over wireless network 30.

30 Wireless communications device 20 may also have a display 24, e.g., a liquid crystal display, to display information received by device 20 over wireless network 30. Display 24 may be capable of displaying numbers, letters,

and other symbols associated with telephone calling, such as *, #, \, -, etc.

A subscriber billing system 50 may be used by wireless service provider 40. A subscriber to wireless service provider 40 may establish an account 52 in subscriber billing system 50. Money may be credited to the subscriber's account 52 when the subscriber provides payment to wireless service provider 40. Conversely, money may be debited from account 52 upon use of wireless communications device 20 by the subscriber.

Computer terminal 100 may be any type of computer processing and data transmission system. For example, terminal 100 may be a personal computer with a microprocessor 102, a memory 104, a modem 106, a display screen 108, and a keyboard 110 for entering gaming transaction information into terminal 100. Modem 106 is capable of transmitting and receiving data over a digital communications network 120 such as the Internet. Alternatively, terminal 100 may be an on-line point of sale terminal which is part of a network of such terminals.

Electronic lottery transaction system 10 includes a processor 60 for playing an instant lottery game or other wagering game and for keeping track of player gaming transactions. Processor 60 is capable of digital communication with wireless communications device 20 via wireless service provider 40 and wireless network 30, and with computer terminal 100 over digital communications network 120. Communications between wireless service provider 40 and processor 60 may be via, e.g., an external network or extranet, a direct or virtual private network, satellite communications, or radio link.

System 10 includes player account database 80. Player account database 80 establishes, maintains and stores

records of individual accounts such as player account 82. Money may be debited from player account 82 when the player places a wager using system 10. Conversely, money may be credited to account 82 when the player receives winnings for a wager he or she has made using system 10. In order for a player to perform gaming transactions using system 10, the player may be required to establish account 82 prior to using system 10 by providing an advance payment which is credited to account 82.

System 10 also includes instant ticket database 70. Instant ticket database 70 stores a plurality of sets of instant gaming numbers for instant tickets. The stored sets of gaming numbers are accessed by gaming processor 60 to obtain a set of gaming numbers for an instant ticket purchased by a player using system 10.

System 10 may also be used in conjunction with a financial institution 90. Financial institution 90 may maintain a player's bank account 92. Processor 60 may communicate with financial institution 90 to verify a player's credit or financial standing in conjunction with establishing and maintaining player account 82 in player account database 80.

FIGS. 2A and 2B are a flow chart showing a method 200 of playing an instant lottery. To play an instant lottery game using system 10, a player who subscribes to a wireless communications service may purchase an instant lottery ticket and play an instant lottery game using wireless communications device 20.

Prior to purchasing the ticket, the player provides funds to an account from which the cost of the ticket and any predetermined transaction fees will be taken upon purchase of a ticket (step 210). The player may fund either the lottery account 82 stored in the player account database

80 or the player's wireless service provider account 52 stored in subscriber billing system 50. The player may fund the player's lottery account 52, e.g., by direct payment to a gaming authority, using a pre-paid telephone card, or via
5 the Internet by an electronic commerce transaction using a computer terminal such as terminal 100 by which funds are securely transferred electronically to the player's lottery account 82 from another account such as the player's bank account 92 at financial institution 90. Alternatively, the
10 player may fund the player's wireless service provider account 52 by providing pre-payment to wireless service provider 40.

The player initiates the instant lottery transaction by dialing a predetermined telephone number or selects a
15 special dial code on a wireless communications device 20, which results in the purchase of an instant lottery ticket and the playing of the instant lottery game (step 220). For example, using a keypad 22 similar to a standard telephone keypad, the dial code #946, which corresponds to "#WIN", may
20 be used to initiate the instant lottery transaction.

Gaming processor 60 authorizes the player's purchase of an instant lottery ticket by deducting the wager amount and any transaction fees from either the player's lottery account 82 or the player's wireless service provider account
25 52, depending on which account has been funded in advance for making gaming transactions (step 230). Gaming processor 60 next selects a set of gaming numbers for the instant lottery ticket from a pool of instant lottery tickets stored in instant ticket database 70 (step 240). Gaming processor
30 60 also records the gaming transaction in player account database 80 for later verification of the player's purchase of the instant lottery ticket (step 250).

Gaming processor 60 transmits the selected set of gaming numbers for the instant ticket to wireless communications device 20 for display on display 24 (step 260). The gaming numbers may be displayed either all at once or one at a time. Display 24 allows device 20 to function essentially as a wireless video lottery terminal.

Gaming processor 60 determines whether the player's instant lottery ticket is a winning ticket based on predetermined gaming criteria, e.g., by comparing the selected set of gaming numbers to a set of winning numbers (step 270). Gaming processor 60 communicates the results of the comparison to wireless gaming device 20 over wireless network 30, indicating whether or not the player's instant lottery ticket is a winning ticket (step 280). If the player's instant ticket is a winning ticket, the player's winnings may be posted to the player's lottery account 82 or the player's wireless service provider account 52, depending on a selection made by the player prior to playing the game (step 290).

System 10 may also be used to initiate instant lottery and other gaming transactions via computer terminal 100 or a traditional on-line transaction processing system, such as a network of on-line point of sale terminals.

The present invention allows gaming transactions to be made using a system that is entirely wireless. Such a wireless system may not be subject to currently applicable limitations on wagers made over the Internet or over telephone lines. Further, an increasing number of individuals in the United States and abroad have access to wireless communications over wireless networks.

A system such as that shown in FIG. 1 may be used to play any of a large variety of games, as well as multiple-player games, e.g., an interactive racing game.

Other embodiments are within the scope of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1 1. A system for playing a wagering game by a
2 player over a wireless network, comprising:
3 a processor capable of issuing a gaming ticket in
4 response to a request made by the player for placing a wager
5 on the wagering game, the processor being capable of
6 determining whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket
7 based on a predetermined criterion; and
8 a wireless communications device used by the player
9 for making the request to place the wager and for receiving
10 an indication from the processor whether the gaming ticket
11 has been determined to be a winning ticket.

1 2. The system of claim 1 wherein the wagering game
2 is an instant lottery game and the gaming ticket is an
3 instant lottery ticket.

1 3. The system of claim 1 further comprising
2 an account database connected to the processor for
3 storing information relating to the gaming ticket and the
4 wager.

1 4. The system of claim 3 wherein the account
2 database stores a player gaming account associated with the
3 player, and an amount corresponding to the wager is deducted
4 from the player gaming account when the player makes the
5 request to place the wager.

1 5. The system of claim 4 wherein a monetary prize
2 associated with a gaming ticket determined to be a winning
3 ticket is credited to the player gaming account.

1 6. The system of claim 1 further comprising
2 a ticket database from which the processor obtains
3 the gaming ticket.

1 7. The system of claim 1 further comprising
2 a billing system associated with use of the wireless
3 communications device over the wireless network, the billing
4 system storing a billing account;
5 wherein an amount corresponding to the wager is
6 deducted from the player gaming account when the player
7 makes the request to place the wager.

1 8. The system of claim 1 wherein the gaming ticket
2 comprises gaming information and the predetermined criterion
3 is predetermined winning information, and the determination
4 whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket is made by
5 comparing the gaming information to the predetermined
6 winning information.

1 9. The system of claim 1 wherein the wireless
2 communications device is a cellular telephone.

1 10. The system of claim 1 wherein the wireless
2 communications device includes a display and the indication
3 whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket is displayed
4 to the player on the display.

1 11. The system of claim 1 wherein the wireless
2 communications device comprises a keypad for dialing a code
3 to make the request to place the wager.

1 12. The system of claim 1 further comprising a
2 computer terminal capable of communicating with the
3 processor over a second network to make the request to place
4 the wager.

1 13. The system of claim 12 wherein the computer
2 terminal is an on-line point of sale terminal.

1 14. A system for playing a wagering game by a
2 player over a wireless network, comprising:
3 a processor capable of issuing a gaming ticket in
4 response to a request made by the player for placing a wager
5 on the wagering game, the processor being capable of
6 determining whether the gaming ticket is a winning ticket
7 based on a predetermined criterion;
8 an account database connected to the processor for
9 storing information relating to the gaming ticket and the
10 wager, the account database storing a player gaming account
11 associated with the player, and an amount corresponding to
12 the wager is deducted from the player gaming account when
13 the player makes the request to place the wager;
14 a ticket database from which the processor obtains
15 the gaming ticket; and
16 a wireless communications device used by the player
17 for making the request to place the wager and for receiving
18 an indication from the processor whether the gaming ticket
19 has been determined to be a winning ticket.

1 15. A method of playing a wagering game over a
2 wireless network using a wireless communications device,
3 comprising:
4 requesting issuance of a gaming ticket to place a
5 wager on the wagering game over the wireless network using
6 the wireless communications device;
7 issuing the gaming ticket;
8 determining whether the gaming ticket is a winning
9 ticket based on a predetermined criterion; and
10 providing an indication whether the gaming ticket is
11 a winning ticket over the wireless network to the wireless
12 communications device.

1 16. The method of claim 15 further comprising
2 establishing an account prior to playing the
3 wagering game.

1 17. The method of claim 16 further comprising
2 deducting an amount corresponding to the wager from
3 the account when requesting issuance of the gaming ticket to
4 place the wager.

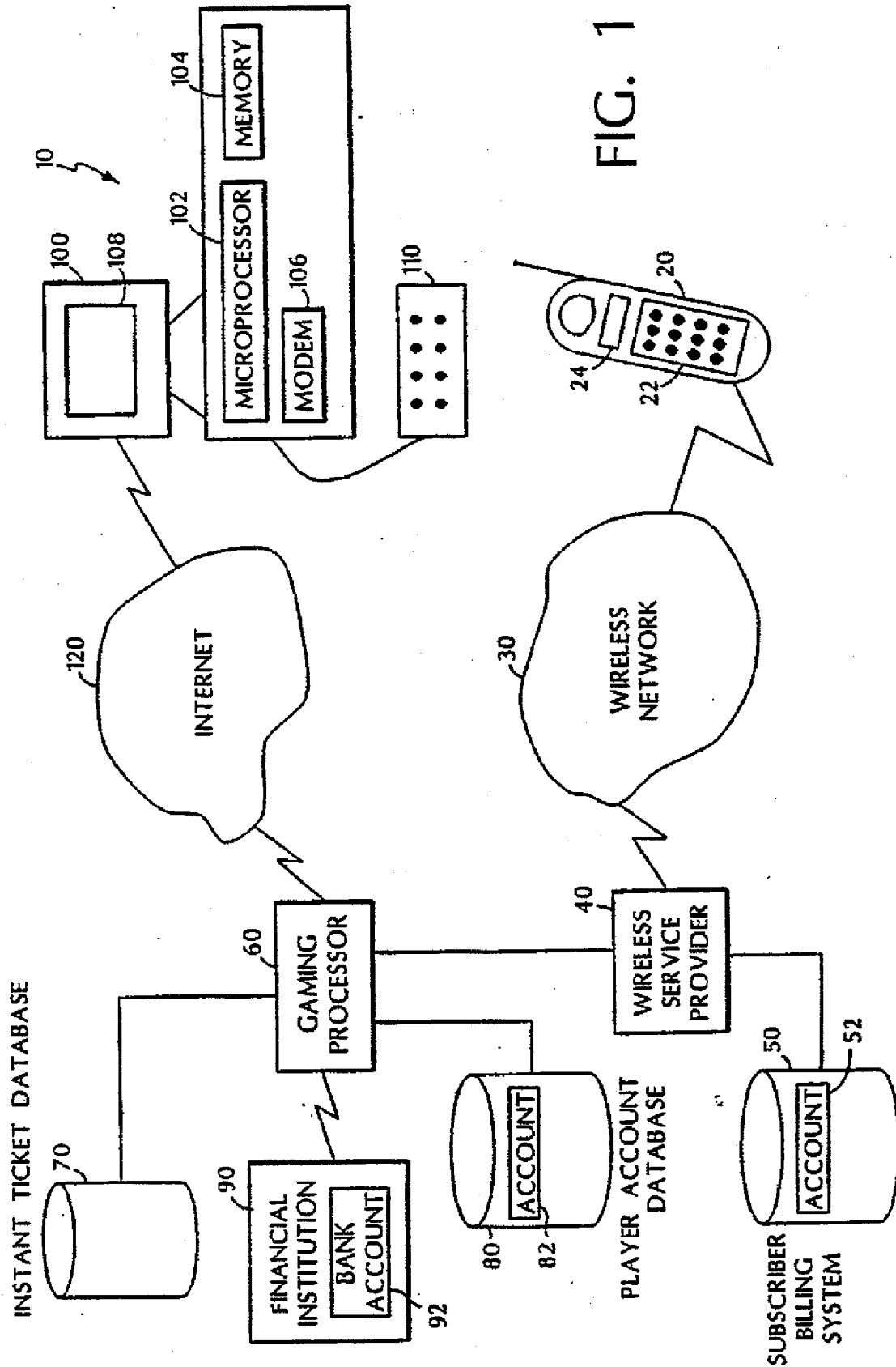
1 18. The method of claim 16 further comprising
2 posting a monetary prize associated with a winning
3 ticket to the account.

1 19. The method of claim 15 further comprising
2 transmitting the gaming information to the wireless
3 communications device for display on the wireless
4 communications device.

1 20. The method of claim 15 wherein the requesting
2 issuance of the gaming ticket comprises dialing a
3 predetermined code on the wireless communications device.

1 21. The method of claim 15 wherein the gaming
2 ticket comprises gaming information and the predetermined
3 criterion is winning information, and whether the gaming
4 ticket is determined to be a winning ticket comprises
5 comparing the gaming information to the winning information.

1/2



2/2

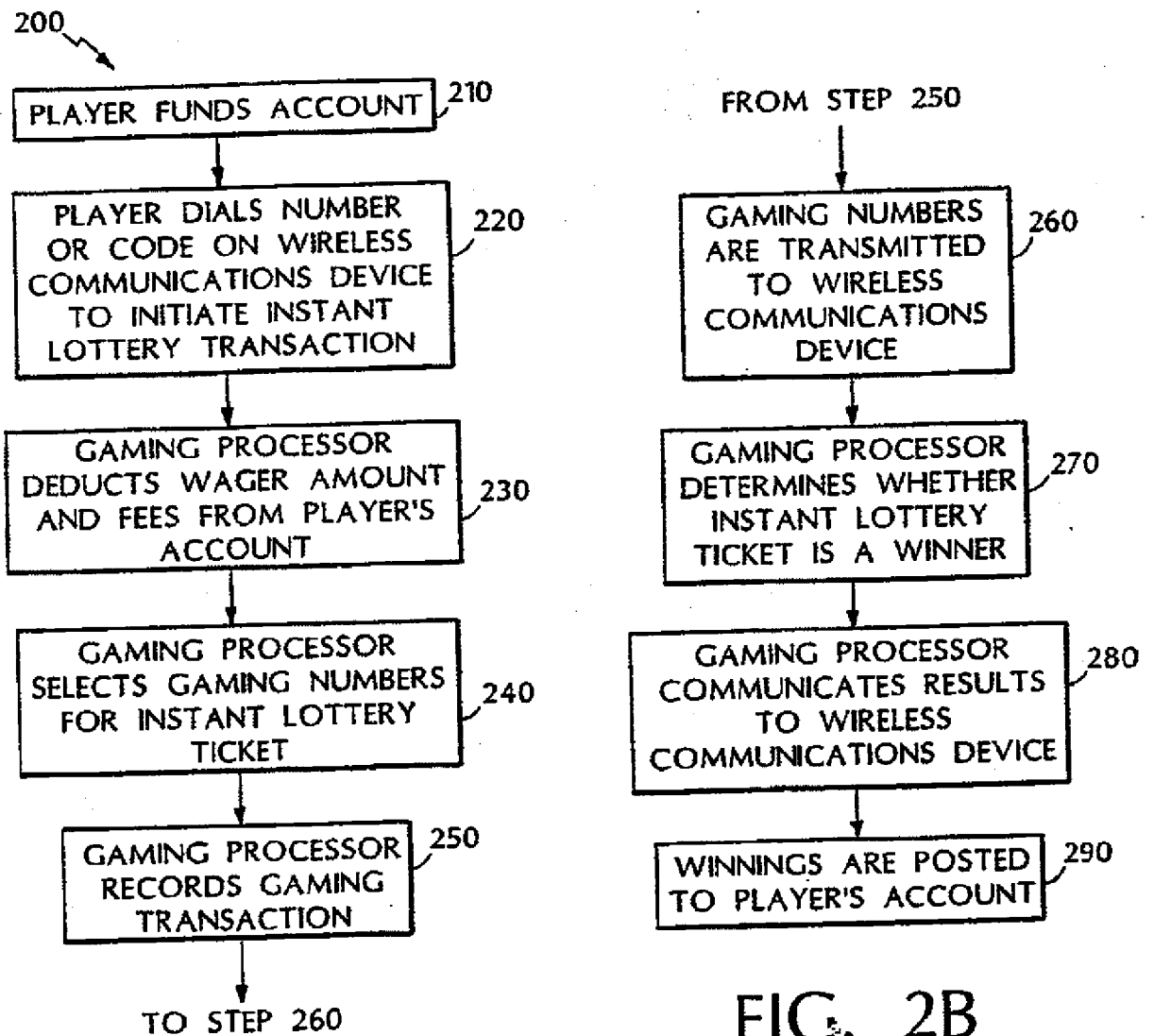


FIG. 2A

FIG. 2B

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US00/18671

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) :A63F 3/06

US CL :463/17, 25, 39, 42

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 463/17, 25, 39, 42; 455/412

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EAST

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,816,919 A (<i>SCAGNELLI et al.</i>) 06 October 1998, column 3, lines 16-46; column 4, line 32 to column 5, line 19; column 8, lines 11-32; column 12, lines 1-11.	1-9, 11-18, 20, 21
Y, P	US 5,999,808 A (<i>LaDUE</i>) 07 December 1999, column 1, line 55 to column 2, line 8; column 10, line 40 to column 11, line 23.	10, 19

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.☐ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

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document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

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document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"Z"

document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

08 AUGUST 2000

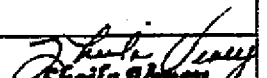
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Name and mailing address of the ISA/US
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Box PCT
Washington, D.C. 20231

Authorized officer

BENJAMIN LAYNO


Sheila Vencey
Paralegal Specialist
Washington, Center 370